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"CONFIDENTIALITY": A CASE OF DOUBLETHINK?

"War is Peace. Freedom is Slavery. Ignorance is Strength."

These were the three slogans of the Party of "Big Brother" in George Orwell's famous novel of a totalitarian future, Nineteen Eighty-Four. They were classic examples of "doublethink," the main psychological weapon by which, in that nightmare society, all concepts of value and virtue came to be turned literally inside-out, and thus emptied of meaning.

In the field of social welfare today, one of the most important and highly treasured of concepts has been that of "confidentiality" -- with reference to the personal case record of the client and the intimate information it contains. "Confidentiality" has long been assumed by most of us to mean just what it says: namely, that this information is confidential, private, privileged, not to be publicly disclosed or broadcast.

But it now appears that this is not, for many social workers, the meaning of the term at all. According to a publication of the National Social Welfare Assembly, "confidentiality" does not mean confidentiality but something else -- something which it is difficult for a layman to distinguish from un-confidentiality.

Here is the new definition, or redefinition, of the term and the concept as set forth in Confidentiality in Social Services to Individuals (published by J. B. Watkins Company, New York, 1958);

"Confidentiality is a dynamic, not a static concept. The client has a right to expect the agency to use information constructively in his behalf. This involves not only protection against improper disclosure, but also the responsible sharing of pertinent information with appropriate persons at appropriate times in order to provide the best possible service.

"... Confidentiality cannot be narrowly viewed as a bond of secrecy between a worker and a client. The realistic contemporary view of confidentiality is that a relationship exists between a troubled person and an agency, and that the agency gives assurance to the person for responsible use of information obtained."

"Confidentiality," in short, is disclosure -- "proper" disclosure, of course, to "appropriate" persons for "responsible purposes" -- but nevertheless disclosure.

It would be hard to mistake the meaning of this remarkable statement. For its authors and authorizers (the National Social Welfare Assembly), "confidentiality" now signifies not the client's right to privacy and safeguarding of his dossier but rather his "right" to have it disclosed and disseminated. The only recognizable right is the right of the social worker and the agency to do with this "confidential" material whatever they see fit. Who is to decide what is "proper," "appropriate" and "responsible" disclosure? Certainly not the client -- who comes to be viewed as a "troubled person" whose relationship with the agency is one of total dependency and hence of total irresponsibility. Nowhere in this quasi-official pronouncement on confidentiality is there any recognition of the right of the client himself to a voice in deciding whether and when his own intimate record is to be "shared" and circulated. On the contrary, the more usual practice and policy of social welfare agencies is to withhold the case record from the client himself: i.e., to uphold the principle of confidentiality rigorously with respect to the client, if to no one else!

Let there be any doubt as to the position of workers and agencies for the blind regarding this grave reversal of welfare principles, the reader is referred to an article in the September, 1961, issue of The New Outlook for the Blind, official journal of the American Foundation for the Blind. Writing under the title "The Case Record: An Evaluative Process," Doris P. Sausser, a regional representative of the AFB, cites the above-quoted redefinition of confidentiality and warmly commends it to others with this additional observation: "The record is written to be used. It is a manner of communicating with oneself, with the agency, and with any other appropriate individuals." (Emphasis added.)

What became of the client in this list of those to whom the case record communicates? More importantly, what becomes of the client in this new dispensation of welfare "doublethink" -- in which what was once confidential is now available, and what was once a right of privacy becomes a "right" to publicity?

To the 100,000 and more blind Americans who are the recipients of services from national and state agencies of welfare -- and to the hundreds of thousands of sightless persons who form the clientele of private as well as

public agencies -- these proclamations seem in effect to provide a final comforting assurance from the pages of Nineteen Eighty-Four: "Big Brother is Watching Over You."

SOCIAL SECURITY: TODAY'S CHALLENGE IN PUBLIC WELFARE

By Dr. Jacobus tenBroek

The important laws of our land--the statutes which have attained stature--are each a compound of many things. They are admixtures of form and substance, of letter and spirit, of the old and the new, of conservatism and liberalism, of policies and practices, of conflicting pressures and opposing politics. In a sense, they are what they become. They acquire the character of institutions. They have a life of their own. Like the men and the societies which produce them, they come into being, move through stages of faltering infancy, rambunctious youth, stable maturity. Eventually they pass from the scene leaving behind them their numerous offspring, their impact in positive results, their remains to fertilize the soil where statutes grow.

So with the Social Security Act of the United States. It was born of the Great Depression. It contains a mixture of goals and organizational methods. It defines a few policies and prescribes more administrative details. It encompasses the old Elizabethan poor law and the new social insurances. It sets in balance the pressures to do much and the pressures to do little. It accommodates the opposite poles and divergent directives of nationalism and localism; a general progressive tax and a special regressive one; benefits as a right and relief as a gratuity; group need as a product of the economy and individual need as a product of the personality.

Today, after a quarter of a century of existence, the Social Security Act is approaching maturity. Its character is mainly formed though it will still go through many changes of life.

Its main features are two: social insurance and public assistance. The first includes unemployment insurance, old age and survivors insurance, and disability insurance. The second includes child welfare services and the categorical aid program of old age assistance, aid to

dependent children, aid to the permanently and totally disabled, and aid to the needy blind. The first was designed to embrace the common and recurring needs created by the complexities of our society and the uneven operation of our economic system. The second was intended mainly to fill the remaining gaps--to furnish relief for the uninsured residual groups.

In submitting his proposals for a system of social security in 1935, President Roosevelt said: "In the important field of security for our old people, it seems necessary to adopt these principles--first, noncontributory old age pensions for those who are now too old to build up their own insurance;...for perhaps 30 years to come funds will have to be provided by the States and the Federal Government to meet these pensions. Second, compulsory contributory annuities which in time will establish a self-supporting system for those now young and for future generations.... It is proposed that the Federal Government assume one-half the cost of the old age pension plan, which ought ultimately to be supplanted by self-supporting annuity plans."

The Social Security Act as adopted by Congress contained the system of "compulsory contributory annuities" for those then young and for future generations. It constituted the foundation of the social insurance program. The plan for noncontributory pensions, supported by the States and the Federal Government, formed the foundation of the public assistance program for the aged.

Both sides of the program--contributory insurance and noncontributory assistance--were products of the depression. "We can eliminate many of the factors that cause economic depressions," said President Roosevelt in presenting his proposal, "and we can provide the means of mitigating their results. This plan for economic security is at once a measure of prevention and a method of alleviation."

Of the two concepts of security, it was social insurance which was clearly the favorite, not only of the President but of the lawmakers and of the general public. One of the congressional sponsors of the system, Senator George, gave the reasons: "There has developed through the years a feeling both in and out of Congress that the contributory social insurance principle fits our times--that it serves a vital need that cannot be as well served otherwise. It comports better than any substitute we have discovered with the American concept that free men want to earn their security and not ask for doles--that what is due as a matter of earned right is far better than a

gratuity." "Social security," he said with reference to the projected insurances, "is not a handout; it is not charity; it is not relief. It is an earned right based upon the contributions and earnings of the individual. As an earned right, the individual is eligible to receive his benefits in dignity and self-respect."

This then was the intent of Congress and the policy of the President a quarter of a century ago, with regard to the comprehensive innovation of social security. In some important respects their purposes have clearly stood the tests of time and change, of war and peace, prosperity and recession, exploding populations and rising expectations. Public support for the program has steadily grown. Political opposition no longer centers upon its underlying principles but only upon the mapping of its outer boundaries, and the classification of the marginal folk who dwell there.

But the years have nevertheless wrought deep changes upon the two pillars of social security. They have thrown up formidable challenges to its purposes and goals. Some of the challenges are affirmative, calling upon us to bolster existing trends and fulfill the potential promise of the Act. Others of the challenges are negative, reflecting counter-trends which serve to place those purposes and promises in jeopardy.

Four vital areas in particular may be identified in which the social security system faces critical tests today. They are: (1) the challenge to fortify and expand the constructive elements in public assistance; (2) the challenge presented by the creeping infiltration into social security of the law of crimes; and (4) the challenge to bring the United States Constitution effectively to bear upon the policies and administration of public welfare.

Let us look more closely at each of these areas of challenge.

1. The paramount task confronting public assistance is not itself new but it has, however, become newly important and freshly urgent. It is that of eliminating the corrosive and anachronistic features of the program handed down from the medieval poor law, recognizing its permanency as a form of welfare aid and its dignity as a democratic measure.

Public assistance can no longer be regarded as a temporary stopgap or as a kind of national dump for the disposal of unsolved social ills. Once it comes to be viewed as a long-range permanent program with an independent right to existence, filling genuine needs which arise from social no less than personal causes and which are required to be met constructively as well as palliatively, the way is opened for fundamental improvement.

In this sweeping reorientation, public assistance must be directed as much toward opportunity as toward security. It must be geared to rehabilitation, employment and self-support, as well as to relief. It must help people out of their distress, not merely in it. It must represent not a handout to the helpless but an active encouragement of their capacities for self-reliance and self-help.

The amendments to the Social Security Act which Congress passed in 1956 were a long first step in this constructive direction. The explicit addition of self-support and self-care to the list of purposes to be served invigorated the program with a new and affirmative spirit. Now recognized were the social and subjective needs of recipients--their needs for self-sufficiency and self-respect, for independence and incentive--as no less pertinent to the purposes of public assistance than their animal needs for shelter and bare subsistence. With this express avowal, the categorical aid programs moved out of the middle ages into the modern democratic era. There is not only significance but, to me at least, a quality of excitement in the simple declaration of purpose of the 1956 amendments: "To promote the well-being of the Nation by...helping to strengthen family life and helping needy families and individuals to attain the maximum economic and personal independence of which they are capable." Each of the purpose clauses of the several public assistance titles now repeats and re-affirms these goals with only technical variations.

There is a special challenge and a cautionary note in this newly affirmative approach for social workers who fill the positions in the field. The modern programs of public assistance call upon these professionals for a degree of understanding and a quality of exertion far greater than that required by the administration of palliative relief. In the new perspective more than ever the worker's role is one of guidance, not of governance; of informed suggestion, not of arbitrary command; of limited obligation, not of "whole responsibility"; and

above all of full respect for the rights and powers of the public assistance client. The basic tenet of our emerging welfare philosophy, as of democracy itself, is that the individual who applies for aid is to be regarded as competent and responsible, as well as innocent, until proved otherwise--that he is an ultimately self-sufficient and self-directing agent, both entitled to happiness and capable of pursuing it in his own way. It cannot be a principle of welfare that the government giveth, and the government taketh away. The American citizen does not by the act of falling into need surrender his personal sovereignty, or waive his entitlement to the Bill of Rights, or turn in at the agency desk his political and moral credit cards. The help he needs from government, to repeat a hackneyed but still pertinent phrase, is only to help himself.

2. The challenge to the welfare system on its other side--that of the social insurances--takes the form of a movement of thought and law which, if not soon halted, threatens to undermine the original character of the program and to wipe out the lines of distinction which have hitherto separated it from the relief provisions of the system. The attack is three-pronged. First, it would strip the program of its insurance characteristics by defining the regular payroll contributions of future beneficiaries not as premium payments to a trust fund but as only another form of federal tax--and a regressive one at that. Second, it would sweep aside as illegitimate and frivolous the time-honored assumption of Congress and the public alike that the benefits of social insurance are received as a matter of earned right. Instead it would regard them as a gratuity no different from relief, to be conditionally granted or withheld by government at its discretion. Finally, this same movement has imported into the statutes and regulations of social insurance an ever-increasing battery of moral, political and behavioral tests which were no part of the original law and which in effect convert its benefits into a reward for good conduct. During the last decade the Act has been successively amended to deny the benefits of social insurance to persons guilty of a variety of crimes or to aliens deported on any of 14 grounds.

In the case of Flemming v. Nestor, decided only last year, the United States Supreme Court lent its sanction to this tripartite attack upon the original meaning of the social insurances. It did so by denying the claim of an insured person to benefit payments under the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance program to which he had become entitled through age and continuous payroll contributions.

Speaking for the court, which was divided five to four, Justice Harlan explicitly rejected the notion--once taken for granted by Senator George and his colleagues--that social insurance benefits have the character of an earned right. "It is hardly profitable," said Justice Harlan, "to engage in conceptualizations regarding 'earned rights' and 'gratuities....' To engraft upon the social security system a concept of 'accrued property rights' would deprive it of the flexibility and boldness in adjustment to ever-changing conditions which it demands." The program instead was described as one "enacted pursuant to Congress' power to 'spend money in aid of the general welfare,'"--one in which, accordingly, the contributions of employed persons were not on the order of premium payments into a trust fund, to be paid back to the insured upon maturity, but rather a tax to be used in public relief of the retired and disabled.

Insofar as this new doctrine comes to be accepted and enforced, these programs are not insurances at all but charities--programs of relief to which individual eligibility is never certain but remains forever contingent and revokable. There has been smuggled into the contributory social insurances the behavioral qualifications and norms of worthiness, of deserving and undeserving, of morality and deviations from it, which have traditionally characterized, and once served to distinguish, the poor-relief programs of public assistance.

The challenge which is here laid down, by the Supreme Court as by Congress, goes to the very root of the social insurances. If they are to retain their original and distinctive character--if they are to justify the faith of those who fathered them and of those who now support them--the challenge must be forcefully met. The concept of benefits as a matter of right, not of charity, must be fully reinstated. With the restoration of rights must come the repulsion of personal tests of morality and conduct.

3. The most pervasive and perhaps the most insidious, of all the challenges to social security today is the increasing penetration into its programs of the punitive law of crimes. Congress itself has taken a number of steps to assist this infiltration on both sides of the system. It has decreed on the side of social insurance, that a person who commits treason may, as added punishment, be denied accrued benefits under the program; that one who has engaged in sedition may be similarly stripped; and so may those who have been deported from the land on any of 14 different grounds. On the side of public assistance

Congress has augmented the influence of the law of crimes by adding to the federal statute a requirement that law enforcement officers must be notified in all cases of aid to needy children where there is an absence of a parent.

In our own State of California the penetration of the criminal law into public assistance may be seen in the increasing proliferation of local rules and practices bringing to bear the methods of the lie detector to determine truth, of the blood test to establish parentage, of the night raid upon the homes of recipients to flush suspected partners, of the beating of park bushes and other public places to deter promiscuity--indeed, of the whole repressive weight of criminal investigations and police authority.

I am bound to say, moreover, that some of the worst instances of this regressive tendency have taken place in the county of San Diego. It is here that the administration of aid to needy children came in recent months most fully under the sway of law enforcement agencies. It is here that a special aid to needy children review unit was installed in the office of the county district attorney, who was given sweeping powers over welfare--among them the actual determination of eligibility for Aid to Needy Children. In practical effect, the administration of Aid to Needy Children in the county was handed over lock, stock and barrel to the district attorney, with the welfare director functioning as little more than a subordinate arm and instrument of his office.

Nor is this all. Here in San Diego the district attorney and a municipal court judge, in case after case, systematically invoked the penal code and the sanctions of the law of crimes in order to solve at a stroke the human and social problems of welfare. Under pain of punishment and imprisonment they compelled eligible mothers to get off the relief rolls and go to work, without regard for conditions of health or ability to labor, or the need of the children for the presence of their mother, or proper provision for the children's care, or any other consideration of welfare.

The challenge to social security involved in this pervasive encroachment of the law of crimes is critical and immediate. The human problems with which the program of Aid to Needy Children is necessarily concerned--problems of economic distress, of social dislocation, of personal confusion--cannot be solved by criminal sanctions and the threat of punishment. They can be adequately understood and constructively approached only by measures addressed

to their conditions and consequences. Such a measure, however limited its objective and partial its success, is Aid to Needy Children. For it seeks above all to improve the condition and prospects of children from distressed and impoverished families; to afford them something of the ordinary stability of education and upbringing; to allow them access to normal community life and recreation; to enhance their stunted opportunities for healthy growth into responsible citizenship; and, in so doing, to assist their parents toward a modicum of self-sufficiency and independence.

It is this simple idea that lies at the heart of the modern law of the modern public assistance program and at the root of its persistent conflict with the much more ancient law of crimes. For the assumptions and objectives of the law of crimes are diametrically opposed. Its preliminary assumption is that persons in deprived circumstances are there either through wilful choice or incorrigible deficiency of character. Its ultimate objective is to eliminate the problem by suppression and punishment. Problems of poverty and immorality, of social change and economic depression, all are perceived by the law of crimes in the same narrow focus of personal responsibility, to be solved by arrest and investigation, by penal sanctions and retributions.

4. I come now to the last of our challenges. Thus far, I have analyzed the intrusion of the law of crimes in terms of its incompatibility with the purposes and functions of social security. It is also significant, however, in another vital connection. To call the police is to invoke the police powers of the Constitution, not its general welfare powers. The police powers are those that deal with maintaining order, preventing vice and crime, securing safety, and protecting health and morals. When problems of poverty are handled under the police powers of the Constitution, poverty comes to be equated with disease, immorality and disorder. Indeed, historically these have proved to be inseparable conditions. The constitutional powers of police have generally been called upon to protect one part of the community against another--the comfortable against the needy.

A classic illustration is to be found in the famous, (or rather infamous) case of New York v. Miln, decided by the United States Supreme Court in 1837. "It is as competent and necessary for a state," said the Justices in that case, "to provide precautionary measures against the moral pestilence of paupers, vagabonds and possibly

convicts as it is to guard against the physical pestilence which may arise from unsound and infectious articles imported, or from a ship, the crew of which may be laboring under an infectious disease." Accordingly, the Court held valid a New York statute designed to exclude the poor and the unwanted brought to New York from other states or from foreign countries. The statute was found to be a regulation of police, not of commerce, and therefore within the power of the state.

So, by this doctrine, the constitutional power of the states to deal with the poor is the police power to preserve public order, to quarantine contagion, to protect morals and to maintain safety; and poverty entails constitutional no less than social degradation. Financial, physical and mental well-being are tests of entitlement to constitutional rights. Welfare programs founded in these conceptions and sustained by this power focus on problems of behavior, utilize instruments of coercion and restraint, and are oriented towards keeping the peace and maintaining public order. They are designed to safeguard the health, safety, morals and well-being of the fortunate in the community rather than directly to improve the lot of the unfortunate.

Many of these ideas survive to plague us today. Perhaps they do not have quite the unquestioned dominance of a century ago but they still hold sway. Numerous recent public utterances by citizens and officials alike make clear that not even the rhetoric has altered substantially.

We see it all again, or still, in county resort ordinances conceived in discrimination, adopted in discrimination, applied in discrimination against aid to needy children families. We see it in night raids, in polygraph tests and in unwarrantable searches and seizures. We see it in compulsory authorizations by applicants to provide knowledge about the contents of their "trunks, bags and boxes" containing the intimate mementos and remembrances carried into old age and destitution.

We see it all again, or still, in conditions of probation imposed by the judges that forbid mothers to secure public aid for their children, whatever their need of eligibility; that command them to support their children on threat of imprisonment whatever their ability, whatever the need of the children for their care at home, whatever the unavailability of jobs for the unskilled and the socially and economically marginal. We see it in provisions that would make these people moral by the injunction to be "good"--whatever their cultural family

patterns and group mores, whatever their individual retardations and instabilities.

We see it all again, or still, in the denial by these actions of the constitutional guarantees of the equal protection of the laws, of due process of the law, of the right of the people to be secure in their persons, papers, houses and effects, of the right to privacy and the right to counsel.

We see it all again, or still, in the fact that a California appellate court found it necessary only four months ago to declare that these people "are not second class citizens entitled only to second class justice."

We see it all again, or still, in the language of the United States Supreme Court in the Nestor case, decided just eight months ago, refusing the protection of the due process clause and other constitutional provisions to those with accrued rights to benefits under the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance Program on the ground that all they had was a claim to a "non-contractual benefit under a social welfare program."

Justice Robert Jackson, in Edwards v. California, the 1941 counterpart of the Miln case of a century ago, felt the impulse and found the words to capture the constitutional hopes of the underprivileged: "Does indigence," he asked, "constitute a basis for restricting the freedom of a citizen, as crime or contagion warrants its restriction? We should say now," he answered, "and in no uncertain terms, that a man's mere property status, without more, cannot be used by a state to test, qualify or limit his rights as a citizen of the United States. Indigence in itself is neither a source of rights nor a basis for denying them. The mere state of being without funds is a neutral fact--constitutionally an irrelevance, like race, creed or color." Such distinctions he said are "a short-sighted blow at the security of property itself." For "property can have no more dangerous, even if unwitting enemy, than one who would make its possession a pretext for unequal or exclusive civil rights."

What is most striking about this statement is not its eloquence, though that is great. It is not its democracy, though that is certain. It is not its recognition of the dignity and worth of the human person, though that is priceless. What is most striking is that it was a minority opinion. It could not command the acquiescence or support of the majority of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The task that lies ahead of us--the greatest of all the challenges to our welfare system--is to elevate this doctrine from a minority plea to a majority command, to transform it from a promise into a reality. When, in addition, it is enshrined in the hearts of Americans as well as in the edicts of their government, then will the constitutional law of the land truly be brought to the people of the Nation.

* * * * *

It is especially appropriate to talk about today's challenges in public welfare in Southern California. This part of the State and Nation, this community, must face those challenges as must every other community in the land. In addition, this region and this community must face a special challenge.

In our fast-moving world, those who concentrate too much on the past may not live well today and may not live at all tomorrow. Yet remembering our beginnings, grasping the significance of our history, is an instructive enterprise, to neglect which may be equally dangerous.

The famous historian of the West and Southwest, Hubert Bancroft, says in the first volume of his HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA that "On the 28th of September, 1542, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, coming from the south in command of two Spanish exploring vessels, discovered a land-locked and very good harbor...." Thus was San Diego Bay entered for the first time by a European. There were people already on the scene. The native Indians had been there for generations, perhaps for centuries. They were described by the Spaniards as well-formed, of large size and clothed in skins. Interviews were held with them on shore and on ship, some voluntary, some involuntary.

Four centuries later, the officials of the county of San Diego denied county aid to the Indians living in the neighborhood. This was done on the ground, of all things, that they did not meet residence requirements. To withhold county aid on the ground that they were Indians and we have a prejudice against them; or on the ground that we took the land from them and to the victor belongs the spoils; or on the ground that they were not close enough to starvation to fall below the white man's test of decent and healthful living for Indians; or on the ground that their morals, mores, and cultural patterns, were not the same as ours--all or any one of these grounds would have been understandable, if not commendable. But these grounds were not mentioned. Instead, the county officials

chose to rely on the proposition that these people were not eligible to make a withdrawal from the common resources of the community they and their ancestors had lived in for a thousand years, and for many generations before the Europeans set foot on the continent, let alone in the particular area, because they had not lived here long enough. What a mockery of history! As late as the Year of Grace 1954, the state courts intervened to prohibit this county practice.

It was not until 1769, 227 years after Cabrillo entered San Diego Bay, that a European settlement was established here. Or was it European? The band of forty people who founded the mission, and erected the presidio, consisted of eight Lower California Indians, to some extent converted and civilized, and of thirty-two persons said to be of Spanish blood but more probably of mixed Spanish, Negro and Indian blood.

Nearby, or at least nearby today, if not then, a short time later in the year 1781, the town of Los Angeles was founded. There were twelve settlers and their families, forty-six persons in all. Among the adults were ten Indians, eight Mollattoes, two Negroes, one Mestizo, one Chino, (the word used for Filipinos), and two Spaniards. Of the four Indian men, three were married to Indian women, the other was married to a Mollatress. The two Negro men were married to Mollatresses. The two Mollato men were also married to Mollatresses. The Mestizo was married to a Mollatress. The two Spanish men were married to Indian women. The Chino had a child but no wife. Some historians doubt that he was a Chino. They think he may have been the offspring of an Indian mother and father of mixed Spanish-Negro blood.

In organizing the Pueblo of Los Angeles, each family received a town lot, four fields, and a branding iron, without distinction of race, class, previous condition, marital status, or the legitimacy of themselves or their children.

This then is our special public welfare challenge. How shall we deny our origins, spurn our Founding Fathers, repudiate our history? Here, if anywhere, it should be possible to hold high the banner of the Constitution with its proclamation of the equal protection of the laws for the privileged and the underprivileged, the colored and the undercolored, those with the same and those with different mores, cultural patterns and habits of life. Here, if anywhere, in this broad and bountiful land there should be "neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free," black nor white, Indian nor Mexican, but only the free man and citizen in the society of equals to which we aspire.

THE ORGANIZED BLIND IN CALIFORNIA

By Russell Kletzing

(Editor's Note: Following is the text of a statement by Russell Kletzing, President of the California Council of the Blind, which was delivered by James McGinnis of the C.C.B. before the State Welfare Study Commission at a Los Angeles hearing on October 27, 1961. Because of widespread interest in the generally progressive programs of this state, and because Mr. Kletzing's historical survey and analysis contains information useful to blind organizations and agencies elsewhere, the statement is herewith reprinted in its entirety.)

(The Welfare Study Commission was appointed by the 1961 California Legislature to take "a critical new look" at all social welfare programs and procedures of the state. Among the 19 prominent citizens appointed by Governor Pat Brown to man the commission is Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, President of the American Brotherhood for the Blind and Chairman of the California State Board of Social Welfare.)

The California Council of the Blind was founded in 1934 by a small group of blind men and women and a handful of sighted persons genuinely interested in working with the blind. Today the principles remain basically the same. Its aims and objectives through the intervening years have been enlarged and advanced. The efforts of the California Council of the Blind are directed toward dispelling the many misconceptions concerning blindness, complete vocational rehabilitation, promoting self-care and a better standard of living for the elderly blind, furnishing of information of vital interest to the blind pertaining to laws and regulations affecting the blind, and providing better job opportunities for the qualified blind.

The California Council of the Blind today is a non-profit corporation with 30 chapters throughout California. It is the only statewide organization of the blind with membership open to both civilians and veterans who are blind. It is comprised almost entirely of blind people, and its officers and executive committee serve entirely without pay.

The organized blind of California have made the development of an outstanding program of Aid to the Blind their major effort over the past 42 years. This effort is based on the knowledge that a sound and progressive plan

of public assistance for the blind constitutes the foundation around which to build services designed to promote physical, social, and economic rehabilitation. Rehabilitation in its truest sense may be regarded as the restoration of the individual to the fullest possible measure of health, usefulness, and satisfaction. To attain this goal, aid to the blind must be so geared in its administration and supervision as to assist blind men and women to achieve those adjustments which will reduce dependency and thus make possible fuller integration into society.

In 1919 the California Legislature enacted a statute which empowered the counties to grant aid to needy blind persons in an amount not to exceed \$150 per year (amended in 1921 to \$180 a year). Since this act was permissive and did not provide for any state financial participation, it was inadequate both from the point of view of the number of blind persons afforded assistance and also the amount of the grant. In fact, as late as 1928, after nine years of operation of the statute, only 735 needy blind persons were receiving assistance in but eight counties of the state.

Realizing that only a pitifully small amount of financial assistance was being given to but a fraction of California's needy population, the organized blind sponsored an initiative measure in 1928 which would, if approved by the electorate, amend the Constitution by giving the Legislature the power to grant aid to the needy blind persons. On November 6, 1938, this amendment to the Constitution was approved by the people of California by an overwhelming popular vote of almost five to one.

In 1929 the California Legislature, clothed with this constitutional authority so overwhelmingly voted by the people, enacted Chapter 529 of the Statutes of 1929, which was a comprehensive statute, drafted by the organized blind of the State, granting financial assistance to needy blind persons on a statewide basis with financial responsibility shared equally by the State and counties. Since July, 1936, the Federal Government has participated in the financing of the Aid to Needy Blind program under the provisions of Title X of the Social Security Act.

All of the provisions of the original act of 1929, and of the many liberalizing amendments subsequently made thereto, were designed to effectuate the three-fold purpose of relieving blind persons from the distress of poverty, enlarging the economic opportunities of the blind, and stimulating the blind to greater efforts in achieving self-care and/or self-support. Thus California antedated by some 27 years the 1956 amendments to the purpose clauses of the Social Security Act.

In order to achieve the extensive rehabilitative objectives which it wishes to see accomplished by means of the 1929 act, the Legislature set up in the statute itself standards which defined just what constituted "need" and just who were "needy blind persons" in order to provide a decent amount of financial assistance to every needy blind person. The act provided an initial zone of security in the form of exempt income and property and, later, a "floor" to relief. The original act wisely provided for the creation of a Division for the Blind in the State Department of Welfare to supervise the administration of Aid to the Blind by the counties. This is the only effective way of preventing Aid to the Blind from being scrambled with other programs of public assistance, and thus having its different objectives lost. This separate Division has, in addition to the function of supervising the administration of Aid to the Blind, been responsible for determining degree of blindness and for the prevention of blindness program. This has provided an administrative structure which assures the continual recognition of the special needs and requirements of blind recipients, promotes an understanding on the part of the county social workers and their supervisors of the creation and utilization of resources which contribute to the attainment of self-care and self-support by blind recipients, and makes possible the formulation of rules and regulations which relate directly to the needs of blind persons.

In 1941 the Aid to Needy Blind Law was amended to bring it into conformity with recent amendments to Title X of the Social Security Act which required the consideration of all income and resources in determining the amount of the grant, i.e., the elimination of the exempt income provision. However, the amendments also provided that any income which the recipient might possess could be used to the extent necessary to meet any actual need above the grant.

While the Aid to Needy Blind Act has been amended at almost every session of the Legislature since its original passage in 1929, there are several major amendments which should be noted and which have occurred during the 32 years of its existence, with the active sponsorship of the California Council of the Blind. In 1936 the residence requirement was reduced from ten years to the present five out of the last nine years for those persons who became blind while not residents of California. In 1936 an amendment to the law abolished the budgetary deficiency method of computing the amount of aid to be received by a blind person and instead a flat grant of \$50 a month was written into the law, thus making the maximum grant both the

minimum and the maximum. Since that time the amount of the grant has gradually been increased to the present \$115. (\$117.80 come January 1, 1962). In 1950 provision was made for the establishment of Bureaus for the Blind in the larger counties to raise the whole level of administration of Aid to the Blind, one of the most vitally important provisions of the statute. In 1957 the Public Assistance Medical Care Program was enacted, with the provisions extended to blind recipients in need of medical care. Finally, in 1961 three significant changes were made in the laws--the so-called escalator provision was written into the statutes whereby the amount of aid would be increased each year to reflect increases in the cost-of-living; the responsibility of relatives provisions were repealed outright; and provision was made for the payment of the costs of special needs up to \$50 a month when actual need exceeded the minimum.

When in 1941 it became necessary to amend the Aid to Needy Blind Law to conform with amendments to the Social Security Act by deleting the exempt income provision, a way was sought by the California Council of the Blind whereby those blind persons with the capacity for becoming self-supporting might be encouraged and assisted in working toward that goal. The result was the enactment by the 1941 Legislature of a second program of public assistance for the blind, Aid to Partially Self-Supporting Blind Residents, to be financed entirely by state and county funds. This second program resulted from recognition on the part of the Legislature that maintenance alone is not sufficient for those blind persons who have a desire to achieve self-support--that, in addition to providing for the physical necessities of life, these people need encouragement to utilize their productive capacities and that this required the incentive of exempt income from earnings. This program was and has remained over the past twenty years an innovation in that it is a plan of public assistance geared specifically to economic rehabilitation. The amount of exempt income has increased from \$400 a year in 1941 to \$800 in 1945, \$1,000 plus one-half over \$1,000 in 1950, and \$1,200 plus one-half over \$1,200 in 1959. Thus California pioneered the now famous "sliding-scale" of exempt income fully ten years before it became a part of the Social Security Act.

Even though in 1960 Title X of the Social Security Act was amended by the Congress to provide for the exemption of \$85 a month, thus permitting this provision to be placed in every State's Aid to Needy Blind Law, it should be noted that California's Aid to Potentially Self-Supporting Blind Residents statute remains a far more effective

instrument to assist a needy blind person to achieve economic rehabilitation. This is true because: (1) the annual basis for computing exempt income is preferable to the monthly basis in Aid to Needy Blind since there is considerable variation in monthly earnings, found particularly in self-employment enterprises; (2) the Aid to Potentially Self-Supporting Blind Residents statute exempts income from all sources, not merely from earnings; and (3) the rigid real and personal property limitations imposed by the Federal Government for Aid to Needy Blind make it difficult for any blind person to achieve self-support from either a business or farm enterprise or from a professional practice.

As a necessary part of the full functioning of these two public assistance programs for the blind, California has developed a Prevention of Blindness program which, during the past 16 years, has been the means of restoring sight to more than 3,000 recipients of Aid to the Blind.

The people of the State of California have had some 42 years experience in dealing with the problem of public assistance for the blind. During this period of time can be found ample evidence of immense achievement in developing a plan for sightless men and women which more adequately meets their needs. The adequacy of any state's financial assistance program for blind persons can be measured only in part by the total number of needy persons who are given assistance and the amount of the average grant. Judged by these criteria, California has made more adequate provision for its blind citizens than most other states. However, the effectiveness of any public assistance program for the blind cannot be measured entirely by the number of recipients or the average monthly grant. The program should be administered in an imaginative manner so that it actually lends itself as an effective instrument to blind men and women in their efforts to make their major adjustments. California's programs have done just that.

California's position in the vanguard of the states stems from two factors: The experience which the people of this state have gained over the past 42 years in dealing with the problem; and the sympathetic and understanding interest which the representatives of the people in the Legislature have at all times displayed in their consideration of the problems of the blind. This enlightened and generous attitude stems from the people as a whole, and is effectively translated into sound legislation by the members of the Legislature who have evolved a plan of public assistance for the needy blind which gives effective recognition to the fact that a blind person has a

greater need because there are additional elements comprising it--a program of public assistance for the blind maintained and strengthened so as to assist the blind person in solving his physical, social, and economic problems.

California's Social Welfare Programs for the Blind have become a model for other states of the nation and justify the major effort put forth by the organized blind for more than 40 years. It is the continuing concern of the California Council of the Blind that these programs be even further developed and strengthened so that they may even more adequately meet the needs of blind persons in our state.

P.S.: NEW PROPERTY PROVISIONS IN CALIFORNIA AID

By Perry Sundquist

(Editor's note: Mr. Sundquist is Chief of the Division for the Blind in the California Department of Social Welfare. His article, summarizing recent state legislation affecting property provisions of the various public assistance programs, constitutes an appropriate postscript to the foregoing review by Mr. Kletzing and should be of equal interest to blind persons and organizations in other states.)

Chapter 1971 of the Statutes of 1961 (AB 1808) codifies into one chapter of the Welfare and Institutions Code the various property provisions currently included in the code sections dealing with Aid to Needy Blind, Old Age Security, and Aid to Disabled.

The new chapter on property represents a marked departure from the previous provisions and becomes operative January 1, 1962. No longer is the overriding consideration the total amount of property held. Rather, eligibility is contingent primarily on the purposes for which particular types of property are held--for a home, for income, for income-producing purposes to help meet the recipient's need, and for future contingencies. In other words, in determining eligibility with respect to property, it is necessary to ascertain the purposes for which the applicant holds the property. Thus, the property provisions place the emphasis on the purpose for which property is allowed to be held. The specific limitations with respect to use or total value on some types of property holdings constitute a part of the definition of a needy person; but the more important consideration is that property may be held, within those

limitations, because it meets a present or future need of the recipient.

The major changes as a result of the enactment of Chapter 1971 are:

1. Any real or personal property used as a home is exempt from any limitation as to value. In the event that the property used as a home is a multiple dwelling structure, the units not used as a home must be yielding a rental commensurate with their value and the recipient must use such rental toward meeting his needs.
2. Real property other than the home can be retained in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 assessed value, provided such property is yielding a reasonable return and the recipient uses such return to meet his needs.
3. Personal property, in the form of "reserves" can be retained in an amount not to exceed \$1,200 for a recipient or \$2,000 for a couple when both are receiving aid. The usual exemptions have been carried over with respect to personal effects; household furnishings, an automobile needed for transportation, etc. Also, the net appraised market value of any real property not being utilized can be retained provided that all reserves held do not exceed the limitations of \$1,200 or \$2,000.
4. Provision is made for the retention of property in any amount by an applicant provided he has a plan to convert such property for the purpose of buying a home within six months of application for aid. The recipient continues to have one year in which to use proceeds from a conversion in order to purchase a suitable home.
5. Provision is made for the retention of property which is determined to be necessary as a part of a self-care or rehabilitation plan.
6. There is excluded in determining eligibility under the new chapter any property right which is not available to meet a current or future need, i.e., the net value only of property holdings can be counted.

Finally, Chapter 1995 of the Statutes of 1961 (AB 730) pertains to Aid to Potentially Self-Supporting Blind Residents (Chapter 3). This new law permits a retention of property used as a home, irrespective of its value. Also, personal effects and an automobile needed for transportation are exempt in determining the total amount

of personal property which may be held. The APSB recipient continues, as at present, to be eligible if he does not own real and/or personal property in excess of \$5,000 assessed value, less encumbrances. This no longer includes the home. He can also have additional real and/or personal property up to another \$5,000 in value if it is determined that such additional property is necessary to implement a plan for self-support.

From the foregoing it will be readily apparent that the Legislature broadened considerably the property provisions governing the public assistance programs in California.

FATHER CARROLL'S "BLINDNESS": A BOOK REVIEW

By Dr. Floyd W. Matson

Blindness: What It Is, What It Does, and How to Live With It. By Rev. Thomas J. Carroll. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961.

The various problems and handicaps associated with "blindness and the blind" have in the past been written about, argued over and speculated upon from almost as many viewpoints -- or so it would seem -- as there have been writers, arguers and speculators. But underlying all this diversity two main avenues of approach to the subject are clearly discernible. The traditional literature on blindness, until well into our own century, tended predominantly to reflect the moral and spiritual concerns of those who manned the posts of the early charitable and benevolent institutions. Moreover, the heavily inspirational tone of the standard 19th-century contributions revealed (as it concealed) the paucity of reliable factual knowledge about blindness -- while at the same time it mirrored the general suspicion of the age that the total helplessness of the blind was to be assuaged, if at all, only through counsels of sympathy and salvation.

Something of that traditional approach, and that pessimistic appraisal, are still no doubt to be detected in present-day literature on blindness -- most notably, perhaps, in first-person narratives, popular treatises and fund-raising appeals. But the dominant note of most contemporary writings is strikingly and radically different. The "old-fashioned" moral atmosphere has been replaced by the antiseptic aura of science; the rambling narrative of

personal excursions "out of darkness into grace" has given way to the orderly progression of statistical tables, and the vocabulary of humanitarianism has been succeeded by the jargon of academic psychology and professional casework. A volume on blindness which once might have borne the title KEEP YOUR CHIN UP is more likely today to find publication under the label SOME ASPECTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REHABILITATION IN THE NON-WAR BLIND OF COOK COUNTY.

The most refreshing, if not the most important, thing about Father Carroll's new book is that it masterfully avoids the extremes of both of these opposed traditions, while it manages to incorporate much that is best in each of them. The author is, of course, himself the heir -- or the embodiment -- of both traditions. He is the founder and Director of St. Paul's Rehabilitation Center for the Blind in Boston; National Chaplain of the Blinded Veterans Association, and member of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Rehabilitation as well as of the World Commission on Research in Rehabilitation. Last year Father Carroll was the recipient of the Belle Greve memorial award of the National Rehabilitation Association for his "noteworthy development and imaginative administration of an adjustment center for the blind, for his special techniques in training rehabilitation personnel and for speeches and writing designed to give better public understanding of the blind." He is, in short, singularly qualified to undertake a study of blindness designed to reveal (as his subtitle stipulates) "what it is, what it does and how to live with it."

But his success is, nevertheless, only partial. In a work as comprehensive, not to say ambitious, in its intention as Father Carroll's, it is perhaps inevitable that the author's reach should somewhat exceed his grasp. The book is divided into four separate and substantial sections. The first part, "Analysis of What is Lost," is an appraisal of "lacks and losses" accompanying blindness -- mainly physical, sensory and psychological. Part Two, "Rehabilitation and Restoration," deals with problems of restoring skills and abilities; Part Three is concerned with the special problems of a variety of groups such as the congenitally blind, the multiply handicapped and the partially seeing; and the fourth part constitutes a study of organized social work and welfare practices for the blind. Even an author as broadly qualified and widely experienced as Father Carroll might be expected to accomplish these varied tasks rather unevenly -- and such is the case.

The most glaring weakness of the volume is in the final section on "Organized Work for the Blind" -- which is, indeed, by far the briefest part of the work (totaling only 35 pages). No mention at all is made here of the Social Security Act and the vast system of public welfare, national and state, which centers around the public assistance programs of Aid to the Blind and the social insurance provisions for the disabled. (In an earlier section, the author does urge the adoption of a vaguely defined social-insurance payment to the blind, but without recognition of existing OASI and disability protection and with a curiously blithe rejection of the established principle of aid under public assistance.) Nor is there any reference to the distinctive, and enormous, contributions made in the field over the years by the organized national movement of the blind in America. Several pages are devoted to "The Blindfold as a Training Tool," but none to the nationwide program of vending stands for the blind; still more space is given to the role of the sighted volunteer worker in a social agency, but there is no consideration of such vexed and vital problems of client-worker relations as that of "confidentiality" (see editorial elsewhere in this issue).

Generally on the credit side, however, is Father Carroll's lucid and liberal treatment of the issues surrounding "segregation" of blind persons in agency facilities for training, orientation and special employment. His forthright discussion of the limited values of sheltered workshops, in particular, should be "must" reading for all associated with this timeworn (if not wholly outworn) institution. In brief, his conclusion is that there is no legitimate place for the sheltered workshop either as a rehabilitation training facility or as a "production shop" employing blind persons capable of outside work; but that there may be a modest role for special centers offering remunerative opportunities for constructive work and leisure activity for the multiply disabled or permanently "marginal." Commendably, Father Carroll argues that where so-called production shops do continue to exist, "there seems every reason why they should be organized, in recognition of the employees' dignity as laboring men (and not by some paternalistic company union)." Even in the case of training shops and residual sheltered centers, he maintains, "it seems indicated at least that representatives of organized labor should sit on their boards, not only from the standpoint of community cooperation, but to protect the rights of labor in the community from unfair competition and to guard the rights of the blind workers who are the students or clients in these shops."

The author is evidently more at home, and more at ease, in the opening section of the book dealing with the "losses" of blindness. Each of several kinds of "loss" is analyzed in a separate chapter, such as: "Basic Losses to Psychological Security," "Losses in Basic Skills," "Losses in Communication," "Losses in Appreciation," and so on. What is immediately apparent from Father Carroll's lengthy list of "lacks and losses" is that it is oriented primarily toward deprivations of a personal character (whether physical or psychological) imposed by the condition of blindness. Such losses are, to be sure, serious and substantial enough to warrant volumes of description and prescription. But there are also other, and very different, deprivations associated with blindness -- no less real and critical in their effect -- that are not personal but social in origin and character. These are, briefly, the handicaps which society itself imposes upon those who lack sight: the handicaps of discrimination and prejudice, of exclusion and segregation, of custodialism and overprotection. In terms of "losses," they might be described as: loss of equality, loss of opportunity, loss of dignity, loss of privacy, loss of freedom of choice, loss of "normal" status and ordinary regard -- loss even, at some times and in some places, of the rights of citizenship.

These "social losses" accompanying the state of blindness are, no doubt, implicitly recognized throughout Father Carroll's book; and on more than one occasion they are given explicit mention. But nowhere do the oppressive social handicaps of blindness gain anything like the degree of attention and appraisal bestowed by the author upon the physical and psychological deprivations. The result is to give disproportionate emphasis to one side of the total picture of "what blindness is and how to live with it," while effectually minimizing its other side. And there are not a few authorities in the field of work with the blind who would maintain that the most serious of all the "losses" of blindness are the social losses -- and moreover that it is these losses which are most amenable to restoration, rehabilitation and reform.

WELFARE OF THE BLIND: STATE LEGISLATION SUMMARIZED

A broadly affirmative, if somewhat mixed, picture of legislative action in the field of blind welfare has been presented by the states this year, according to a summary of activity reported in the October, 1961, issue of PUBLIC

WELFARE, official journal of the American Public Welfare Association.

Some of the highlights of the partial legislative survey -- listed alphabetically by state -- follow:

CONNECTICUT: The \$85 earned income exemption in Aid to the Blind will be applicable to the state program effective July 1, 1962. The statutes relating to the Board of Education of the Blind were clarified, including a provision for confidentiality of records. The definition of blindness was up-dated and standardized.

ILLINOIS: A bill was passed exempting the cash surrender value of life insurance with a face value of \$1,000 or less in determination of the amount of assistance a blind recipient may receive. Bills failed of passage which were designed to increase standards in Blind Assistance by 10 percent and to exempt from financial responsibility the parents of blind recipients who are over 21 years of age.

MISSOURI: Earned income exemption in Aid to the Blind raised from \$50 a month to the first \$85 of earned income, plus one-half of that in excess of \$85. In addition the maximum of \$10,000 on total property was removed; cash and security maximum of \$1,000 and \$2,000 changed to a personal property maximum of \$1,500 and \$2,500 and it was specified that determination of value of personal property shall exclude the home of the blind person or spouse, burial lot, real or personal property used directly by the blind person in remunerative employment, and clothing, furniture, household equipment and personal jewelry. Another bill makes it possible to use the same examiners for Blind Pension recipients as to determine vision for AB, removes the \$5.00 limitation on the examination charge and the requirement that the cost of the examination be taken out of recipient's first check.

NEBRASKA: This state also passed the above revision on earned income in AB to conform to recent changes in federal law. A law which failed to pass would have removed the present \$100 maximum on BA payments and relieved brothers, sisters and parents of their legal obligation to support applicants and recipients of blind assistance.

NORTH CAROLINA: In addition to revising the law to conform to the new federal regulations, as above, the specific limitation on amount of payments was deleted to allow up to the maximum of federal matching. Another bill established procedure for appointment of a personal representative for an AB recipient on the same basis as provided

in 1959 for OAA, ADC and APTD recipients.

OREGON: A new act will replace on January 1, 1962, the present Aid to the Blind legislation. Provisions include a minimum grant of \$85 a month exclusive of medical, surgical and hospital care; that an otherwise eligible applicant is eligible if he becomes blind while in Oregon or has been a resident of the state for three years preceding date of application.

PENNSYLVANIA: Amount which may be spent in 18 months on a single remedial eye case was increased from \$250 to \$1,000.

SOUTH CAROLINA: There was a \$50,000 increase in the appropriation for AB; \$25,000 increase of that for treatment and training. An act was passed permitting all blind residents to fish or hunt without a license.

WISCONSIN: The legislature passed a joint resolution urging the department to increase the rate of pay for blind workers employed in the sheltered workshop at Milwaukee. Another bill made an appropriation for payment to the Milwaukee City Library for providing library services for the talking book program for the blind, which has heretofore been serviced out of Chicago. The legislature passed the authorizing legislation to permit raising the earned income exemption for the blind to \$85 per month on July 1, 1962, in accordance with federal plan requirements.

BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS

An "Equal-Status" Agency for the Blind. Following is a portion of an editorial which appeared in THE JEWISH BRAILLE REVIEW (February, 1961), edited by Dr. Jacob Freid, Executive Director of the Jewish Braille Institute of America:

"Why are ... all our materials free to any blind person who wishes them? To charge for them would require social service investigation, the power to withhold materials and services from those whom the investigator felt to be able to pay, or deemed unworthy. This power to withhold is too frequently corrupted and corrupting. It sets up subjective inferiority-superiority relationships between the agency worker and the client and destroys the equal status concept. Further, if we were to require payment from the blind who can afford it, it would mean

that we were dispensing charity to the others. And our services, materials and publications are not charity -- they are the discharge of American Jewry's essential and important obligation to permit the Jewish blind to be normal individuals who lead normal lives despite a visual disability -- lives that give fulfillment to aspirations, talents and personalities rather than frustration. This is our aim and objective. That is why your editor fought for the Kennedy-Baring bill for equal rights for the blind in organization, representation and voice in all matters affecting their welfare. It is tragic that the National Federation of the Blind, which is the foremost champion of the blind, should now be impeded by internecine warfare from its appointed tasks.

"The road to tomorrow is hard, but it must be traversed. To the objective of first-class citizenship for the blind this periodical is entirely dedicated, and it welcomes its readers to join it as front-line soldiers in what Heinrich Heine called the liberation war for humanity."

Progress of British Blind Reported. From the 77th Annual Report (1961) of the Royal National Institute for the Blind: "With your help we have, through our rehabilitation centres, enabled 400 newly blind men and women to come to terms with their overwhelming loss, found employment in industry and commerce for 350 sightless whose training has been completed, and printed far in excess of 600,000 highly prized volumes of braille literature and music. Not only this, but, sensitive to the changing pattern of blindness in the young, we have been quick to alter the character of our schools to meet the special needs of the increasing number of young girls and boys who today suffer additional mental or physical handicaps."

Glaucoma Screening. A grant from the New York Lighthouse for the Blind has made possible the establishment of a Glaucoma Screening Demonstration Project within the Ophthalmology Department of New York Medical College, according to the LIGHTHOUSE NEWS, a publication of the New York Association for the Blind. The journal anticipated that 8,000 patients will be examined for chronic glaucoma during the next 12 months under auspices of the project. Two percent of the population was said to be suffering, unknowingly, from simple chronic glaucoma, one of the

leading causes of blindness in this country.

Need for Books Still Great. There are now 65,000 blind readers registered with the 31 regional libraries associated with the Library of Congress' program for the blind, according to THE NEW OUTLOOK FOR THE BLIND (October, 1961). But the number needing library services is much greater -- at least 120,000 potential users. "An expansion of the library program is due -- both in the number of users and in the number and variety of books provided," the American Foundation periodical declared. "When we consider that half of all blind people are 65 years old or older with little else to do with their leisure time, we can understand that the need is imperative indeed."

Public Welfare and the Newcomer. From an article by James R. Dumpson, "Public Welfare and the Newcomer in the Community," PUBLIC WELFARE, October, 1961:

"The right of the newcomer to assistance and care when he is in need should not be determined by a time limit of residence. I am not aware that any state has established a residence requirement as eligibility for receiving protection of the fire or police departments -- services that are as publicly supported as our welfare services. No, the facts about the newcomer do not support a logic that excludes them either from the responsibilities of citizenship in a community or from the rights and privileges provided all the citizens residing in the community. Prejudice against the newcomer, and in our major metropolitan areas against the newcomer with obvious ethnic and cultural differences, permeates efforts to deny them the services of public welfare. Public welfare leadership must take the initiative in resisting these efforts, not only in the interest of the newcomer but, indeed, in the interest of the welfare of the entire community."

Bible Stories on Record. Sixteen famous Bible stories, each dramatized by a cast of well-known actors, have been produced on long-playing recordings by the Library of Sound Education, Inc., 124 East 40th Street, New York 16,

New York. Each of the eight records contains two complete stories and is available from the above firm at a special price to blind persons of \$2.45 (or \$15.95 for the set of eight). The stories re-enacted on each recording are as follows: (1) Noah and the Ark, Story of Joseph; (2) Moses: Egypt, Moses: Promised Land; (3) Battle of Jericho, Samson; (4) Ruth, David and King Saul; (5) David and Goliath, Solomon; (6) Daniel in Lion's Den, Statue of Gold; (7) Birth of Christ, Good Samaritan; (8) Prodigal Son, Events Surrounding Last Supper. The recordings, on 12-inch 33 1/3 RPM discs, are said to be playable on a Talking Book Machine with still better performance obtainable on hi-fi phonographic equipment.

The West Coast Regional Conference of the American Public Welfare Association was held October 16-18 in Berkeley, California. Among welfare developments reported in the direction of expanding employment and self-support was the finding of Santa Clara County, California, that its employment service efforts were netting a savings of \$1 million per year in potential expenditures for persons on public assistance. The conference also heard the report of a Washington county that after an extensive employment service program with 320 families the total monthly aid payments had dropped from \$42,000 to \$3,000.

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